

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in view of the above amendments and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 3-5 are presently active in this case. The present Amendment amends Claim 1; and cancels Claims 2 and 6-8 without prejudice or disclaimer. No new matter is added by this Amendment.

Claims 1 and 4-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Ando et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,385,744).

Claims 2 and 3 were objected to, but indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form. The indication of allowable subject matter is gratefully acknowledged. For the reasons set forth below, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims are now in condition for allowance.

In response to the indication of allowable subject matter, independent Claim 1 is amended to include the features previously set forth in dependent Claim 2, and dependent Claim 2 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that amended independent Claim 1 is presently allowable as acknowledged in the Office Action.

Further, it is respectfully submitted that since dependent Claims 3-5 depend from amended independent Claim 1, they are allowable for at least the same reasons as amended independent Claim 1.

Consequently, for the reasons discussed in detail above, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. Therefore, a Notice of Allowance for Claims 1 and 3-5 is earnestly solicited.

Application No. 10/781,990
Reply to Office Action of November 6, 2006

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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